

WABASH RIVER HERITAGE CORRIDOR COMMISSION
Meeting minutes-September 10, 2003
Cicott Trading Post Park, Warren County
Independence, Indiana

Members present:

Miami County-Ken Einselen
Cass County-Janet Fawley
Tippecanoe County-Norman (Lucky)
Neiburger
DNR-Steve Morris
Parke County-John Isaacs
Carroll County-Donna Romein
(alternate)
Warren County-Louise Jewell
Sullivan County-John Gettinger
Vigo County-Keith Ruble
Knox County-Tracy Newberry
Allen County-Ron James

Proxies:

Huntington County-Lucky Neiburger
Wabash County-Lucky Neiburger
Adams County-Lucky Neiburger
Wells County-Mike Mettler

Non-voting members not present:

DOC-Tourism-Marianna Weinzapfel
DNR Historic Preservation/Archeology
INDOT
IDEM

Voting members not represented:

Fountain County
Gibson County
Jay County
Posey County
Vermillion County

Commission and DNR staff present:

Susan Benner-WRHCC Exec. Director
Jay Keith-DNR Outdoor Recreation
Cynthia Webb-DNR

Others present:

Rory Robinson-National Park Service
Nancy Lutzenberger-Warren County
Park Board
Richard L. Dobbels-Warren County
Commissioner
John H. Henry-Past President, Warren
County Park Board
Bernie Dahl-BOW
John A. Layton-Warren County Council
Susan Ruble
Marian Day

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Lucky (Norman) Neiburger called the meeting to order at 1:15 pm. Lucky reported that Governor Frank O'Bannon was out of the coma. At this time Lucky asked for a moment of silent prayer.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF JULY 9, 2003 MEETING MINUTES

Minutes were approved as written.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Lucky Neiburger announced that he has discovered that a not-for-profit organization, Friends of the Wabash, was formed in 1990. Scott Frankenberger was president at that time and David Wilkensky was acting secretary. Lucky is trying to determine if the not-for-profit organization is legally active and if the organization could serve needs identified by the commission.

Lucky also announced that he would like to establish a committee that goes beyond the commission, possibly called Clear Water for the Wabash. He has been in contact with Earl Butz, former Secretary of Agriculture under the Nixon Administration, Representative Sheila Klinker, Professor Gammon of DePauw University and Senator Tom Weatherwax. Lucky thought such a committee could meet every couple of months and possibly even have subcommittees. One of the main focuses of this committee would be to involve farmers and agriculture. Lucky asked for other suggestions for people to be on the committee. Keith Ruble suggested working with farmers through the Wetland Reserve Program, which is federally funded by the Department of Agriculture and administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service. John Gettinger suggested any land set aside be considered for use as a trail. Janet Fawley asked what part industry should play in such a committee. Steve Morris suggested that combined sewer overflows be included in the committee focus. Bernie Dahl suggested other agencies and institutions should be involved. Keith Ruble and John Gettinger volunteered for the committee.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Susan Benner, Executive Director and John Gettinger attended the Riverwatch Training. Since the WRHCC was awarded the Riverwatch grant, the commission now has the equipment to test the water quality of the Wabash. The grant requires that the Wabash River in Sullivan and Posey Counties be tested four times a year. The commission is allowed to test any additional sites so if anyone is interested in testing the water in their county let Susan know. In addition to the water quality-testing equipment the commission was awarded two books, *Field Manual for Global Low-Cost Water Quality Monitoring* and *Pond Life* and a CD-ROM entitled *Wet Your Waders* all of which is available to borrow from Susan's office.

Rae Schnapp with Hoosier Environmental Council will be speaking at our next meeting in November. Susan passed out an article written by Rae describing the Riverkeeper's initiative regarding the Wabash River. Susan also passed out information regarding Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. who will speak at Hoosier Environmental Council's 20th Anniversary Dinner. Mr. Kennedy is the president of the Waterkeeper Alliance.

Susan will be attending the Big River Educational Workshop conducted on the Mississippi River on September 28th. The purpose of the workshop is to expand one's knowledge of big rivers and their watersheds.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT (continued)

The Friends of the Limberlost Organization are applying to the Indiana Heritage Trust for funds to acquire 14 acres to extend the Wabash River/Rainbow Bend Trail in Adams County. If the project is awarded the funds requested, the trail expansion will be a wonderful addition to the existing trails along the Wabash River.

Susan passed out copies of the July/August edition of Outdoor Indiana magazine, which has an extensive article about the Wabash River in it.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance committee

Steve Morris presented an expense report to the commission. He passed copies out to all members. The report showed expenditures within the budget. Ron Howard had asked for something to this effect at the last meeting. The only current expenditure at this time is the telephone bill. Steve also mentioned he had shipped Wabash River Heritage Corridor brochures to several Indiana interstate welcome centers.

Water Trail Committee

Susan Benner reported the Banks of the Wabash was awarded a \$2,524 grant from Tipmont REMC for development of the water trail.

The estimate provided by Folia to produce 15 signs for the water trail has increased. The new quote they provided to Susan is now \$10,536 for producing 15 signs.

On October 8th John Gettinger, Bernie Dahl, Chuck Weiss and Susan will be traveling to Chicago to view the established water trails that exist in Chicago and the surrounding suburbs. They will be meeting individuals from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the Openlands Project to discuss how they have created their water trails. Any other commissioners are welcome to join them on this trip.

Susan met with Four Rivers RC&D and Sycamore Trails RC&D regarding the development of a water trail on the Wabash. The response from both RC&D's was favorable. Some of the advantages of working with RC&D's is their non-profit status and their knowledgeable grants staff. Tom Straw attended Four Rivers RC&D's annual meeting and spoke about the commission's water trail plan and was met with positive interest.

Newsletter Committee

Keith Ruble handed out a report about the newsletter committee's meeting on August 26, 2003. The committee decided to call the newsletter the Wabash Reflections. The committee decided that the newsletter be circulated electronically, with publication to be every other month, beginning in October. First issue deadline is October 20th. The committee decided to try to get everyone involved in the newsletter, so he drew three names of commission members who are to write an article for the newsletter. The names drawn were Teresa Maxwell, Milo Miller, and Lucky Neiburger. The committee also

decided that the WRHCC Executive Committee should study ways to use reports in the newsletter to expedite the commission's regular meetings.

OLD BUSINESS

Corridor Management Plan

Rory Robinson reported on the Corridor Management Plan. He passed out the rough draft of the Management Plan to the commission members. The final draft is due by November with the plan to be completed and ready for distribution at the end of the year. Rory is working to have graphics added to the plan.

Rory expressed disappointed at having only received comments from one commission member, Ron James. One of Ron's comments is that the plan contains some actions that are not consistent with other actions. Janet Fawley, Ron James and possibly Mike Mettler will review the actions to see if there are any that the commission cannot support.

It was decided to post the draft plan and the resource directory on the commission website and send a postcard notice to all of the public meeting participants in order to gather public comment.

David/Faulkner paintings of the Wabash River

Susan Benner stated that David Dale and Jim Faulkner, artisans, wanted something formal from the commission, stating the commission was supporting them. Susan drafted resolution No. 0212 which states David Dale and Jim Faulkner are creating 56 paintings on the Wabash and a percentage of the art sales of the paintings will go towards supporting the development of a water trail on the Wabash. Lucky Neiburger suggested a motion be made on the resolution during new business.

Proposed change to commission law

DNR's legal counsel's opinion about a quorum for the WRHCC, was answered on August 7, 2003. The legal counsel's opinion is that only those physically present should count toward a quorum.

Suggestion to form 501(c)(3) organization

The Friends of the Wabash a not-for-profit organization that Lucky Neiburger discussed in the President's report could possibly resolve the need to form a 501(c)(3).

Commission retreat

Janet Fawley made a motion to having a commission retreat. John Gettinger seconded the motion, motion passed. It was suggested to having the retreat after the new year. Another suggestion was to have the retreat at Fort Harrison in Indianapolis, and staying over the night before a commission meeting. Ron James made a motion to having the retreat at Fort Harrison, on March 9 – 10th, on a Tuesday night before the Wednesday commission meeting. John Gettinger seconded the motion. Motion passed.

BREAK

After the break, John Henry, founding member of the Warren County Park Board, told the commission about the history of Cicott Trading Post Historical Park. The park has received three WRHC grant fund awards.

NEW BUSINESS

Letters sent / Letter received

Lucky Neiburger sent a letter to Earl Butz, Former Secretary of Agriculture under former President Richard Nixon.

Resolution No. 0212

At this time Resolution No. 0212 was mentioned again regarding officially supporting the efforts of painters David Dale and Jim Faulkner. Janet Fawley made a motion to accept Resolution No. 0212. Steve Morris seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Grant Directory Subscription

Susan Benner presented the commission with two possible grant source directories. The Foundation Directory is available online. The Foundation Directory Online Basic package is available for \$19.95 per month or with an annual subscription at \$195 per year. Susan also passed out what type of information that can be retrieved from the Foundation Center's CD-ROM which is available at the Vigo County Public Library. Susan also passed out the publication entitled "Grants for Cities and Towns." An annual subscription of this publication is available for \$169 (plus \$8.89 shipping and handling). Susan hasn't received much demand for finding grants but has received a call regarding the status of the Wabash River Heritage Corridor Fund. After some discussion, Louise Jewell made a motion to accept the Foundation Directory Online Basic. Janet Fawley seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Reappropriation of WRHC Grant Funds to Knox County

Jay Keith, State & Community Outdoor Recreation Planner for DNR Division of Outdoor Recreation, spoke to the commission of Knox County's request for additional funding. As Jay explained, Wabash River Heritage Corridor Fund Grant (WR-00-16) was funded in the year 2000. One of the scope items was the construction of recreational cabins. The cost estimate for the construction of the cabins was under estimated. A written request by Tracy Newberry, Knox County Parks Superintendent, has been made for additional funding in order to complete the cabin scope item. Support documentation for reappropriation is: (1) There is approximately \$31,000.00 of unused grant award in the Wabash River Heritage Corridor Fund. (2) The Wabash project at Kimmel Park (WR-98-09) was switched to the Indiana Waters Federal Program (F-15-D-62). (3) A main scope item of the project was the construction of access routes (sidewalks) leading to the boat pier. The access routes have been installed and reimbursed through the Indiana Waters Grant Program, thus leaving approximately \$31,000.00 in the Wabash Fund. Justifications for using funds on WR-00-16 (Wabash Trails Park) grant are: It is a recreational project (cabin construction in the park) and the funding will remain in the southern district of the state and in the same county. The recommendation of IDNR- Outdoor Recreation section is to award \$31,000.00 to Knox County Parks and Recreation

to assist in the completion of the recreational cabins and because the project was initially not funded at the \$250,000.00 level as other projects. Therefore, excess grant funding is not being awarded to this project. Janet Fawley made a motion in favor of doing what DNR-Outdoor Recreation has suggested. Keith Ruble seconded the motion. Motion passed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ron James reminded everyone to attend the Johnny Appleseed Festival. It is being held September 20-21, 2003 at Archer Park.

Susan Benner mentioned the canoe and kayak race at Tippecanoe on October 4, 2003.

The Feast of the Hunter's Moon is September 13-14, 2003. It is being held at Fort Quiatenon in West Lafayette.

Steve Morris reminded everyone of the Mid-America Greenways Conference is September 21-24, at the Hyatt Regency in downtown Indianapolis.

Janet Fawley reported that US House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly to restore dedicated funding for Transportation Enhancements in the 2004 federal appropriation bill.

NEXT MEETING-November 12th at the Delphi Canal Park, Delphi Wabash and Erie Canal Interpretive Center

ADJOURNED